

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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VIENNA ALSO FOR EWTDO

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: EEWT,BEXP,BE

SUBJ:EAST-WEST TRADE SEMINAR, ANTWERP, MAY 6, 1976

REF: 76 ANTWERP 163

1. EAST-WEST TRADE SEMINAR SPONSORED JOINTLY BY AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN BELGIUM AND CONGEN WAS HELD AT ANTWERP ON MAY 6, 1976. PROGRAM CONSISTED OF TEN MINUTE INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATIONS BY SIX PANELISTS FOLLOWED BY FORTY-FIVE MINUTE QUESTION/ANSWER PERIOD. AUDIENCE NUMBERED 90 INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES BELGIAN-BASED U.S. MANUFACTURING/SALES FIRMS AND SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF BELGIAN BUSINESSMEN AND A HANDFUL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN TRADE REPRESENTATIONS.

2. THE SIX PANELISTS REPRESENTED FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS: USDOC S EAST-WEST TRADE BUREAU" U.S. EAST-WEST TRADE DEVELOPMENT CENTER (VIENNA)" BANK OF AMERICA" FMC INTERNATIONAL" USSR TRADE MISSION IN BRUSSELS AND" LAW OFFICE FRANK BOAS (BRUSSELS). SET UP INCLUDED LITERATURE TABLE CONTAINING HAND-OUT COPIES OF VARIOUS USDOC PUBLICATIONS AS WELL AS SOME DIRECTORIES AND READING PROVIDED BY SOVIET TRADE REPRESENTATIVE.

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3. ATTENDENCE AT THIS SEMINAR ALMOST TWICE THAT OF SIMILAR

GATHERINGS IN BRUSSELS AND THE HAGUE DURING 1974. THIS HIGH LEVEL OF RESPONSE FROM AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN BELGIUM SUGGESTS THAT A DESIRE TO EXPLORE POSSIBLE NEW MARKETS IN EAST EUROPE IS BEING MORE SHARPLY FELT NOW, IN A RECESSION TIME, THAN WAS THE CASE TWO YEARS AGO. THEREFORE, WE TENTATIVELY CONSIDER SEMINAR TO HAVE BEEN USEFUL.

4. IN ABOUT THREE MONTHS, WE PLAN A MODEST FOLLOW-UP WITH SELECTED ATTENDEES IN EFFORT DISCOVER IF THERE IS LIKELY TO BE AN INCREASE IN U.S. EXPORTS RESULTING FROM SEMINAR. IF OUR FOLLOW-UP PROVIDES SUCH EVIDENCE, IT MAY HELP VALIDATE THIS TYPE OF EXPORT PROMOTION EFFORT IN WESTERN EUROPE.

5. CONGEN WISHES TO EXPRESS SPECIAL THANKS TO EWTDO DIRECTOR DOUGLAS MARTIN WHOSE ADVICE AND SUPPORT THROUGHOUT PLANNING AND EXECUTION STAGES OF SEMINAR WERE INVALUABLE.
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